

January 30, 2003

Federal Communications Commission
Commission Secretary, Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
445 12th Street, SW
CY-B402
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Proceeding 03-16

Ms. Dortch:

It's not a secret that Michigan consumers have many choices for local telephone service. You can't miss the television, radio, newspaper, magazine and billboard ads all over the state. The advertisements are proof that Michiganians have several choices for local service. Companies like MCI WorldCom, AT&T, TDS Metrocom, SBC Michigan and Verizon and the state's many other local providers all offer competitive local phone packages.

Local telephone competition is great for consumers, but it's not enough. Our state needs to have full telecommunications competition, including the long distance market. Right now, SBC Michigan customers do not have the convenience of one stop shopping. Consumers want choices, competitive prices and comprehensive phone packages for all of their telecommunications services. Until SBC is granted long distance approval, I don't see that happening in Michigan.

I support SBC Michigan's efforts to gain long distance approval in Michigan. SBC's service quality has improved a great deal and I believe they are ready to enter the long distance market. I think the company's entry into the market will force other phone companies to offer competitive prices and packages that include local and long distance service. It's time to join other states in the country where consumers are enjoying the many benefits of full competition. Michigan residents deserve to enjoy lower phone bills, one-stop shopping and more choices.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Hazel Lewis, President
NAACP Greater Grand Rapid [Michigan] Branch
640 Eastern, SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616-243-1300